

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 *SUB A<sup>3</sup>* > 1. A communication system comprising:  
2 an IP-enabled communication network;  
3 at least one remote site connected to the communication network, the  
4 remote site comprising:  
5 (a) a plurality of subscribers,  
6 (b) a switch interconnecting the plurality of subscribers,  
7 (c) at least one multi-line hunt group connected to the  
8 switch, and  
9 (d) a gateway interfacing each multi-line hunt group and  
10 the communication network; and  
11 at least one service site connected to the communication network, the  
12 service site comprising:  
13 (e) a service platform providing voice services;  
14 (f) a switch connected to the service platform;  
15 (g) at least one multi-line hunt group connected to the  
16 switch, and  
17 (h) a gateway interfacing each multi-line hunt group and  
18 the communication network.
- 1 2. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service  
2 platform comprises a voicemail platform.
- 1 3. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service  
2 platform comprises a unified messaging platform.
- 1 4. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service  
2 platform comprises a computer telephony interface platform.
- 1 *SUB A<sup>3</sup>* > 5. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the  
2 communication network carries voice over IP (VoIP).

1                   6.     A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the  
2 communication network carries voice over frame relay (VoFR).

1                   7.     A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the  
2 communication network carries voice over ATM (VoATM).

1                   8.     A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway  
2 comprises at least one wide area network access device.

1 *SUB #3*           9.     A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each multi-line  
2 hunt group comprises:  
3                   a plurality of voice communication lines; and  
4                   at least one signaling line carrying signaling data.

1                   10.    A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway  
2 converts voice received over communication lines and signaling data received over  
3 each signaling line into a data format acceptable by the communication network.

1                   11.    A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway  
2 converts line signaling protocols into a format acceptable by the communication  
3 network and passes the converted line signaling protocols to at least one service site.

1                   12.    A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway  
2 implements a tunneling scheme with at least one gateway at a different site to  
3 exchange signaling data.

1                   13.    A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway  
2 compresses and decompresses voice information for reduced communication network  
3 bandwidth.

1                   14.    A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway  
2 performs DS-0 mapping to map individual hunt group members across the  
3 communication network.

1 15. A communication system for transmitting audible messages  
2 over an IP-enabled communication network comprising:

3 a locality of subscriber units;

4 a switch interconnecting the subscriber units, the switch routing traffic  
5 outside of the locality of subscriber units over at least one multi-line hunt group, each  
6 multi-line hunt group including a plurality of voice communication lines and at least  
7 one signaling line carrying signaling data; and

8 a gateway in communication with each multi-line hunt group and the  
9 communication network, the gateway converting voice information received over  
10 each communication line and signaling data received over each signaling line into a  
11 data format acceptable by the communication network.

1 16. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 formats data for voice over IP (VoIP).

1 17. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 formats data for voice over frame relay network (VoFR).

1 18. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 formats data for voice over ATM (VoATM).

1 19. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 comprises at least one wide area network access device.

1 SUB A<sup>3</sup> 20. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 implements a tunneling scheme with at least one gateway at a different site to  
3 exchange signaling data.

1 21. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 compresses and decompresses voice information for reduced communication network  
3 bandwidth.

1                   22. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway  
2 performs DS-0 mapping to map individual hunt group members across the  
3 communication network.

1                   23. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network comprising:  
3                   receiving information from at least one of a plurality of subscribers;  
4                   determining at least one of a plurality of voice communication lines  
5 and at least one signaling line in a multi-line hunt group to carry the received  
6 information and associated signaling;  
7                   formatting information on each of the voice communication lines and  
8 signaling lines into a format compatible with the communication network; and  
9                   sending the formatted information over the communication network.

1                   24. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 further comprising:  
3                   receiving the formatted information over the communication network;  
4                   reformatting the converted information back into the original format  
5 for transmission over at least one of a plurality of voice communication lines and at  
6 least one signaling line in a multi-line hunt group; and  
7                   sending the reformatted information over a multi-line hunt group.

1                   25. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent  
3 to a service platform comprising a voicemail platform.

1                   26. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent  
3 to a service platform comprising a unified messaging platform.

1                   27. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent  
3 to a service platform comprising a computer telephony interface platform.

1 *Sup A<sup>3</sup>* 28. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries  
3 voice over IP (VoIP).

1 29. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries  
3 voice over frame relay (VoFR).

1 30. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled  
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries  
3 voice over ATM (VoATM).

*Add A<sup>3</sup>*